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From: Smith, Bonnie
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Subject: EPA tests four private wells following Miller Chemical fire - EVENING SUN in HANOVER

EPA tests four private wells following Miller Chemical fire

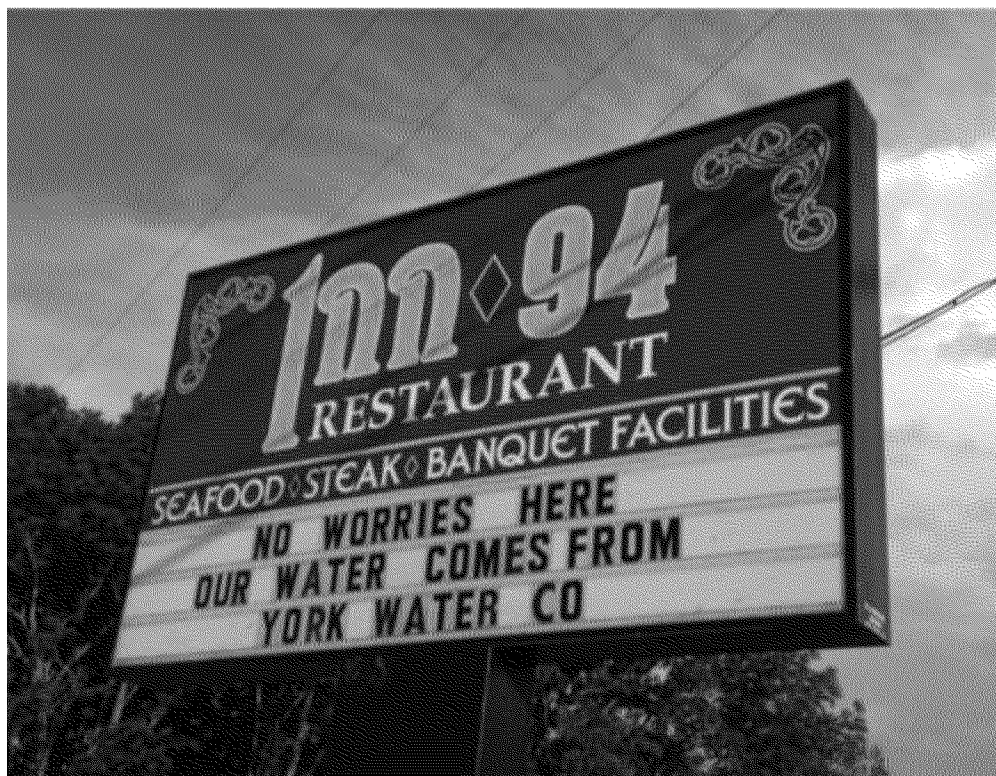
The wells were selected based on information collected by the Department of Environmental Protection last week.

By Lillian Reed

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York Water Company has provided water to areas normally served by the New Oxford Municipal Authority since the morning of June 8, when a fire destroyed a building owned by Miller Chemical and Fertilizer. (Clare Becker - The Evening Sun)

The Environmental Protection Agency collected samples Tuesday from four private wells that may have been contaminated after the June 8 fire at Miller Chemical, officials said.

The Department of Environmental Protection received numerous phone calls last week from residents in York and Adams counties who were concerned about contaminants seeping into their water supply. Polluted runoff from the plant site killed more than 10,000 fish in local waterways, including Conewago Creek, DEP representative John Repetz said.

Though the DEP doesn't regulate private wells, it collected resident's contact information and proved it to the EPA, which then determined four properties that most likely were impacted, he said.

Repetz said he did not know the locations of the four wells.

Several of the federal organization's representatives collecting water samples Tuesday from the four wells, said Repetz and Adams County's emergency services Director John Eline.

The DEP also began preliminary soil testing in the areas surrounding Miller Chemical that may have been contaminated by the runoff, Repetz said.

In the meantime, the ban on swimming, boating and fishing is still in place for the Conewago Creek, Eline said.

Though the creek is showing little to no signs of discoloration, Miller Chemical's environmental cleanup crew is still working to pump contaminated water from the surrounding area, Repetz said.

A storage tank, capable of holding a million gallons of fluid, has been installed at the Miller Chemical site to help collect some of the remaining water in swales and the retention pond, Eline said. The tank will retain the water until it can be properly tested, Repetz said. The results will help officials to determine which waste treatment facility will be properly equipped to treat the water, he said.

Right now, DEP officials' main priority, he said, is to ensure the creek has run clear so that the New Oxford Municipal Authority can begin collecting its own water again.

The New Oxford area has been relying on an interconnection with York Water Company to provide it with water since June 8, said Jeff Hines, York Water Company president.

The interconnection, or large pipe, was developed two or three years ago in case of an emergency like the fire, Hines said, adding that the company has similar connections with other water companies.

This is the first time the company has had to use the interconnect with New Oxford, he said. Hines wasn't sure how long the company would need to continue providing the water but noted doing so doesn't put any strain on the company's supply.

"We'll provide as much as New Oxford needs," Hines said. "We'll have the capacity to provide that."

The company gets its water from Codorus Creek, which is not connected to the Conewago Creek.

Evening Sun reporter Jenni Wentz contributed to this report.

[Read more about the Miller Chemical fire and water issues in Conewago Creek.](#)

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